

VZCZCXRO5055
OO RUEHRG
DE RUEHBR #2002/01 2631914
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 201914Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6728
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY 5678
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 3937
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 4288
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 3439
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 4887
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 3176
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 6483
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 5795
RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE PRIORITY 5494
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 2926
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 8108
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRASILIA 002002

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/25/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: BRAZIL: MISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR RENEWAL OF
BRAZIL'S ABD PROGRAM

REF: A. STATE 139897

[1](#)B. STATE 102423

[1](#)C. BRASILIA 1450

[1](#)D. 05 BRASILIA 2683

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR DENNIS HEARNE. REASONS: 1.4 (B)(D).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. Mission Brazil herewith recommends annual recertification by the President of Brazil's Air Bridge Denial Program (ABD), based on the information below, which is formatted in paras 2-9 in accordance with Department's instructions in ref A. End summary.

PART A: GOB ADHERENCE TO AGREED SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:

[1](#)2. (C) Per ref B instructions, PolCouns, Air Attache and Assistant Air Attache met on 13 July at the Defense Ministry with Major Brigadeiro do Ar (three star equivalent) Ricardo Machado Viera, who commands Brazil's integrated air defense and air traffic control system (COMDABRA), to consult on the status of Brazil's air bridge denial ("shootdown") program. Machado, who was accompanied by two other officers from the ministry, has senior operational command authority over all aspects of air defense and air traffic control in Brazil, and has been involved in all discussions with the USG on the shootdown issue for several years. Machado understands the USG's process for renewal of the Presidential Determination covering U.S. cooperation with Brazil in its ABD program, and he provided (or undertook to provide) answers regarding issues raised in reftel. On key points, he affirmed: (1) that there have been no/no lethal force events in the program over the past year, and (2) there have been no/no changes in the operational and safety procedures referenced in the September 2004 exchange of diplomatic notes between the GOB and USG. Moreover, he offered a review of the program's functioning in practice, reiterated that Brazil's program is focused on dissuasion, and offered (in confidence) his assurance that Brazil's air force would only use lethal force in the context of a carefully pre-planned operation coordinated with police authorities, in which there is certainty about the criminal identity and intent of any suspect, non-cooperative aircraft.

¶3. (C) With regard to ref B issues, Machado affirmed to PolCouns and DAO officers that:

-- There have been no/no incidents of use of lethal force since the advent of Brazil's ABD program until the present date -- neither warning shots nor rounds fired with the intent of disabling/destroying a suspect aircraft;

-- There have been no/no changes of any kind in the Brazilian program's operational and safety procedures from those referenced in the September 2004 exchange of notes between the GOB and USG regarding Brazil's ABD program;

-- Brazil's ability to "see" and track unusual and suspect air activity has improved dramatically with the full implementation of the SIVAM Amazon surveillance system (which uses both ground radar and Embraer R-99 AWACs-type aircraft), introduction of the A-29 ALX "Super Tucano" fighter aircraft and secure data links. As a result, there is an increase in the number of "air tracks of interest" recorded by COMDABRA over the past year. Machado undertook to provide asap his command's statistics on ATOIs, interceptions, and force downs from October 2005 to 30 July 2006.

¶4. (SBU) While the operational and safety procedures of Brazil's program are unchanged from those referenced in the September 2004 exchange of notes, the increased capacity and sophistication of BRAF equipment and methods are enhancing the program's efficiency and safety, Machado said. The R-99 airborne radar aircraft acquired for Brazil's SIVAM program are providing vastly improved coverage, especially when deployed for intensive patrols to areas where there is a

BRASILIA 00002002 002 OF 003

perceived spike in irregular air activity. The R-99 aircraft can interact seamlessly via data links with ground bases and with the A-29 interceptors now coming on line with the BRAF, which are faster, have longer range, and possess sophisticated avionics and surveillance equipment. For example, Machado said an R-99 can locate and track a suspect aircraft beyond visual range, then "stand off" on station as an A-29 moves into position to trail the suspect craft. The A-29 can transmit video images of the suspect plane in real time to both the R-99 and COMDABRA ground stations, and all radio communications between the BRAF interceptor and the suspect plane are also transmitted. Hence the type, tail number and physical aspect of the plane can be seen, facilitating identification by BRAF and the police. The video and audio records are available for after-action assessment or investigation.

¶5. (C) Machado said that the BRAF and COMDABRA now also have superior data bases and modalities in operation for checking suspect aircraft. COMDABRA center commanders are linked directly by secure phones to senior Brazilian Federal Police (DPF) officials in Brasilia and can instantly check tail numbers or other data against police records. All coordination with the DPF is centralized at DPF headquarters in Brasilia, and the BRAF will not act on information or requests for air force support coming from DPF field offices, or from state police agencies. The BRAF also has its own data base of tail numbers of civil aircraft that have irregular or suspect flight histories in Brazilian air space.

¶6. (SBU) Emphasizing that the GOB's approach to its ABD program has always been focused on its use as a tool of dissuasion, Machado noted that, before implementation of the shootdown legislation, narcotrafficking pilots would brazenly ignore BRAF fighters' orders, and even non-criminal pilots would sometimes take a nonchalant attitude toward responding to air force hails. Now, aircraft intercepted, hailed and interrogated by COMDABRA aircraft have a "100 percent" rate of responding and obeying, he added.

PART B: SITE VISITS TO AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTERS:

17. (SBU) Ref A requested site visits by Embassy officers to at least two air traffic control facilities in Brazil, to confirm the level of awareness among ATC personnel of Brazil's ABD program and its procedures. Mission reiterates ref C information that all/repeat/all air traffic control in Brazil, including civil aviation, is handled by uniformed Brazilian Air Force personnel. The ATC centers are co-located with air defense centers at four BRAF facilities which conduct ATC/air defense for the entire country. These four regional BRAF Centers for Air Defense and Air Traffic Control (CINDACTA's) are in addition to air traffic "towers" at larger airfields which control only local take-offs and landings. Hence unlike the U.S., civil air traffic control in Brazil is not dispersed to various regional, state, and municipal airports, but is concentrated exclusively in the four air force centers. Embassy has received BRAF authorization to visit two of the centers on 26-27 September: CINDACTA II in Recife (covering northeastern Brazil) and CINDACTA I in Brasilia (covering central Brazil). Embassy DAO personnel will make the site visits and we will report findings immediately thereafter via septel.

PART C: GOB EFFORTS TO PUBLICIZE ABD PROGRAM:

18. (U) On 16 September, PolCouns, Air Attache and Assistant Air Attache again met with Brigadeiro Machado, COMBADRA commander, at his headquarters in Brasilia. Per ref A questions, Machado provided the following information on GOB and BRAF measures to publicize the existence and procedures of Brazil's ABD program since it entered into force in October 2004:

-- Machado confirmed that the GOB had issued Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) bulletins, per international procedures, when

BRASILIA 00002002 003 OF 003

Brazil's program was publicly announced by then-Defense Minister Viegas in October 2004. Per standard NOTAM procedures, the NOTAM remained published for 56 days, until such time as information about the ABD program was permanently incorporated into Brazil's Aeronautic Information Package (AIP). The information is now contained in the AIP, and is available on the BRAF's website, Machado said, adding that Brazil's civil aviation law has also been amended to reflect the ABD program's existence and scope.

-- The GOB and BRAF also undertook a 30-day media campaign in October 2004, with both the Defense Minister and Machado conducting extensive interviews with national TV, radio and print media, Machado said. In addition, posters outlining the ABD program and its procedures have been posted in public spaces and pilot ready rooms (where flight plans are logged) at airports throughout Brazil, Machado said.

PART D: STATISTICS:

19. (SBU) In response to Mission request, the BRAF provided in an official communique to the Mission the following statistics for the Brazil ABD program, for the period from 1 September 2005 through 31 July 2006:

1. Unknown air tracks: 4,567

II. Suspect air tracks (i.e., considered suspect owing to routes utilized, but not necessarily illegal); OBS: This number is included in I: 108

III. Interceptions realized: 254

IV: Enforcement measures applied:

- a. Change of route: 1
- b. Obligatory landing: 1
- c. Warning fire: 0
- d. Destructive fire: 0

¶V. Quantity of drugs apprehended by police authorities as consequence of realized interceptions: 564 kg.

VI. Statistic for daily average of unknown air tracks: 21.7

(Embassy Note: Machado confirmed that IV a and b, and V refer to the joint BRAF-Federal Police operation described by Machado in ref C. End Embassy note.)

MISSION RECOMMENDATION:

¶10. (SBU) It is this Mission's assessment that Brazilian Air Force and GOB procedures for the Brazilian Air Bridge Denial program continue to fully comply with the mutually agreed terms referenced in the September 2004 USG-GOB exchange of diplomatic notes constituting our bilateral understanding of Brazil's program. On that basis, and subject to septel provision of information deemed satisfactory by Department for Part B above, this Mission recommends Presidential recertification of the Brazil ABD program in October 2006.

CHICOLA